

[FE-30-98](#) (document link)

SUMMARY FOR FE-30-98:
SELECTED AND POSSIBLE CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

SELECTED FACTORS

Railroad: CSX Transportation, Inc.

Location: Boligee, Alabama

Region: Region 3

Month: November

Date: 11/10/98

Time: 2:50 p.m., CST

Data for Fatally Injured Employee(s)

Welder/Helper

42 years old

20 years of service

Last rules training: February 1998

Last safety training: September 1998

Last physical: September 1997

Data for Employees (Craft, Positions, Activity)

Craft: MOW

Positions:

Welder/Helper

Activity: **The Welder/Helper was traveling from New Orleans to Knoxville, where he planned to stay for a few days prior to proceeding to his next assignment in Michigan. He was driving a 2 ½ -ton, 66,000 GVW (gross vehicle weight) welding vehicle at the time of the incident.**

SUMMARY FOR FE-30-98 CONTINUED

POSSIBLE CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

EVENT

A Welder/Helper was en route to his next assignment when he lost control of his vehicle which crashed through the railing and went over a bridge, struck the ground below, rolled 25 feet, and fatally crushed him on impact.

PCF No. 1

The post-accident investigation revealed that just prior to the incident, the right front tire of the welding vehicle had ruptured, causing the driver to lose control. The investigation disclosed no evidence that the tire might have struck a foreign object prior to rupturing.

REPORT: FE-30-98

RAILROAD: CSX Transportation, Inc. (CSX)

LOCATION: Boligee, Alabama

DATE & TIME: Nov. 10, 1998, 2:50 p.m., CST

PROBABLE CAUSE: The Welder/Helper was en route to his next assignment, when the right front tire of the welding vehicle he was driving ruptured, causing the driver to lose control of the vehicle. The vehicle subsequently crashed through the railing, went over a bridge, struck the ground below, rolled 25 feet, and fatally crushed the driver on impact.

EMPLOYEE:

Occupation:	Welder/Helper
Age:	42 Years
Length of Service:	20 Years
Last Rules Training:	Feb. 3, 1998
Last Safety Training:	Sept. 30, 1998
Last Physical Examination:	Sept. 30, 1997

CIRCUMSTANCES PRIOR TO THE ACCIDENT

On the morning of Nov. 10, 1998, the Welder/Helper (CSX Welding Gang 5X09) left New Orleans, Louisiana, driving the welding vehicle. At the weigh station near Picayune, Mississippi, he was delayed because the permits had him traveling the wrong direction. This problem was resolved, and he proceeded northward on I-59 to Knoxville, Tennessee. The Welder/Helper planned to stop over in Knoxville for a few days prior to proceeding on to Michigan for his next assignment.

The vehicle was a 2 ½-ton, 1993 Ford 9000 series, 66,000 GVW (gross vehicle weight), and was specially made by Chemetron ATV(all terrain vehicle).

At the time of the accident, the sky was overcast with a visibility of 7.2 miles, and the temperature was 69° F, with 8.3 mph winds.

THE ACCIDENT

On Nov. 10, 1998, at about 2:50 p.m., CST, (now on I-59/20) near Boligee, Alabama, the eastbound vehicle was traveling about 70 mph, according to the Alabama State Trooper's report of the accident. As the welding vehicle approached the first bridge east of Tombigbee River Bridge, the right front tire ruptured and the vehicle veered to the right and subsequently struck the metal guard rail on the right side, then struck the concrete railing of the west end of the bridge.

After crashing through and knocking out about 10 feet of the railing, the vehicle went over the edge of the bridge, struck the ground below, and rolled over for about 25 feet, coming to rest on its left side. The driver was fatally crushed in the cab of the truck.

POST-ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION

The post-accident investigation disclosed that the tire had apparently ruptured, because there were pieces of the tire and also pieces of the fiberglass fender scattered along the highway about 150 feet preceding the bridge. There was no evidence on the roadway preceding the accident site that the vehicle may have struck a foreign object to cause the tire to fail.

The Alabama State Trooper's "Opinion of what Happened" stated "VI was traveling eastbound when the right front tire failed. The blowout caused the VI to run through the guard rail on the right side of the road, and VI dropped into a ravine, rolling over several times."

REMEDIAL ACTION

The carrier's Engineering Department managers related the accident to their subordinates the next morning. Safety and defensive driving rules were also reviewed.